DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 034 180 AL 002 180

AUTHOR	Feinberg, Lilian O.; Tarjan, Jeno
TITLE	Foreign Language Study in Budapest.
PUB DATE	68
NOTE	4p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (This issue $0.30)
JOURNAL CIT	International Educational and Cultural Exchange; v4 n1 Summer 1968
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.30
DESCRIPTORS	*Bilingualism, *English (Second Language), Hungarian, Instructional Materials, *Language Instruction, Language Laboratories, *Language Programs, *Second Language Learning, Tape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS	*Budapest

ABSTRACT

Foreign language study at the Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences in Budapest aims to develop the ability to use the language as a native would in a particular business or profession, and to help the student become fully aware of the political, historical, sociological, and geographical background of the foreign country and the psycholinguistic implications of the language. The Foreign Language Institute, a separate department within the University, plays an important role in training the students. Language teaching differs with each major field. Students of foreign trade, communications, and international relations must attend classes in two foreign languages for four years: Russian, and one Western European language. There are no beginning language courses for the students--they must demonstrate their competence before admission to the University. Thus the instructors need not teach fundamentals and can concentrate on helping the students attain near-native command of the foreign language. Separate programs--oral-aural exercises, compositions, readings, and language laboratory material--have been developed by the Institute for each major and each language. Materials used in teaching English, criteria for proficiency in two languages, specialized vocabulary materials, the language laboratory, and the Institute staff are briefly described. (AMM)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED034180

Foreign Language Study in Budapest

by LILIAN O. FEINBERG and JENO TARJAN

Hungarian students of the social sciences undergo rigorous foreign language training at the 20-year-old Karl Marx University.

FOREIGN language study at the Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences in Budapest develops the ability to use the language as a native would *in a particular business or profession.* Furthermore, the student becomes fully aware of the political, historical, sociological, and geographical background of the foreign country and the psycholinguistic implications of the language.

BACKGROUND

Education in Hungary has undergone great changes since World War II. The old educational system could not meet the demands for the new types of specialists required by a scientifically planned economy. The greatest lack of specialists was in the technical sciences and industry, since training for engineers and economists had been available in only one polytechnical school in the country. Therefore particular stress was laid on the establishment of new universities and colleges.

The training of economists was entrusted to a special university founded in 1948: the Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences. This university at present consists of three faculties (colleges): General Economics, Commerce, and Industry. The teaching and research work is wholly in the field of the social sciences. The specializations or majors taught include general economics (political economy), public finance, planning and mathematics, international relations, trade (domestic and foreign), industry, and communications. A degree or diploma is awarded after 4 years' work, except for the degree in planning and mathematics, which requires 5 years.

LANGUAGE COURSES

The Foreign Language Institute, a separate department within the university, plays an important role in training the students. Language teaching differs with each major field. Students of foreign trade, communications, and international relations must attend classes in *two* foreign languages for 4 years: Russian and one Western European language—English, German, French, or Spanish. Students make

AL 002 180

their choice before they start a course of study. Once they select a language, they find that their future specialization determines what they read, write, speak, and hear. Separate programs—oral-aural exercises, compositions, readings, and language laboratory material—have been developed by the institute for each major and each language. There are no beginning language courses for these students. On the contrary, they must demonstrate their competence before admission to the university. Thus the instructors need not teach fundamentals and can concentrate on helping the students attain near-native command of the foreign language.

During the 4 years at the university, students with a major in foreign trade or communications spend 4 hours a week in the Russian language course and another 4 hours in the Western European language they have chosen. This adds up to 240 hours in a 30-week academic year or 960 hours of language study during the entire 4 years.

Students in international relations must take a 6-hour per week course in Russian and also a 6-hour course in the other selected language, making 360 hours per year—1440 hours in the 4 years. Classes meet twice (or three times) a week for double periods, each 50 minutes long.

TEACHING ENGLISH

During the first three terms, Language Institute instructors concentrate on raising the students' ability to understand, speak, read, and write the foreign language. At this time they attempt to bring all of the students' knowledge of the language to the same level.

In the English courses the students use textbooks written by the Institute staff: *An Intermediate English Practice Book* and *Advanced Practice Book*. By the close of the third term and during the fourth term they study *Readings for Intermediate and Advanced Students of English about Great Britain and the United States*—the geography, history, and political and social organizations of those countries, compiled by the staff. The selected data are presented in a semiscientific, popular style.

With these readings, a great variety of grammar exercises, and frequent use of language tapes in a modern laboratory, the students' linguistic ability is improved to such an extent that they are able to carry on work in English in their major fields during the third and fourth years of their studies.

FLUENCY IN TWO LANGUAGES

Using special textbooks, mainly staff-written, students embark upon their special course of study during the third year. For all curricula the goal is the same: students are expected to be able to speak, read, and write at least two languages with the emphasis on high standards of oral fluency, translation, and interpretation. Thus a student with a foreign trade major—a would-be sales executive or sales clerk in a state foreign trading company—must have such a command of the language that he will be able to carry out commercial negotiations in the foreign language. A student of international relations must have such competence and knowledge of the cultural variables involved that he is able to translate a wide variety of texts—political, economic, sociological, scientific, and literary—

MRS. LEONARD FEINBERG, an assistant professor at Iowa State University, teaches English to foreign students. She is co-author of "Oral/Aural Motivation: Experiment in Teaching English Composition" (*Exchange*, Spring 1967) and *Unified Exercises*, an English grammar and workbook (Oxford University Press). She was invited to talk to the staff of the Language Institute in Budapest in the summer of 1967.

DR. JENO TARJAN, senior lecturer in English at the Language Institute, Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences, Budapest, collaborated with other staff members in writing the first book on Hungarian for the use of English-speaking people. He is a popular tutor and translator.

as well as to interpret consecutively, and, in some cases, simultaneously.

SPECIALIZED VOCABULARY

Textbooks used in teaching specialized vocabularies for the various curricula include the following[1]:

Foreign Trade, a collection of readings, 200 pp.

I. International trade theory. Economic problems in world trade (12 selections).

II. Trade relations (12 selections), e.g., economic relations between Hungary and the developing countries.

III. International economic organizations (15 selections) e.g., Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the Common Market.

IV. Exhibitions and fairs. Marketing and advertising.

Commercial English.

Part I. Character and organization of Hungarian foreign trade. Foreign trade in Great Britain and the United States of America. Relations with capitalist countries in commercial policy.

Part II. Business letters. The main types of business letters. Inquiries. Replies to inquiries. Offers. Orders. Execution of orders; payment; transport; insurance.

Readings for Students of International Relations, a collection of readings, 230 pp.

Part I. England: brief history, great figures of English history. Literature: Shakespeare, London theaters in Shakespeare's time. England viewed by great writers.

Part II. The United States of America: historical survey. American isolationism. The Monroe Doctrine. Industrialization. Imperialism. The New Deal in the U.S.A. The role of Roosevelt, etc.

Part V. Some questions of world economy.

Part VI. International organizations. The United Nations.

Part VIII. On diplomatic practice: the Foreign Office. Diplomacy trained and untrained. Diplomats must learn foreign languages. Ambassadorial etiquette.

Modern Britain. VEB Verlag Enzyclopedie, Leipzig, 1964.

A clear picture of Britain today from a Marxist point of view: a comprehensive picture of the social, political, cultural life of Great Britain.

Readings for Students of Communications.

Roads and road transport down to 1700. Highways in the coach and turnpike era. Economic consequences of the railways and their effects on other forms of transport. Road goods transport. Motor transport in the 20th century. The reshaping of British railways.

Reading for Students of General Economics.

Adam Smith, "Restraints on Foreign Imports."[2] Ricardo, "On Rent."[3] *The Communist Manifesto.* The transition to imperialism. Finance capital and the financial oligarchy. Keynesian theory in relation to classical theory. Socialism. The basic economic law of socialism. How has socialism turned into a world system?

LANGUAGE LABORATORY

Since 1964 the Institute has required students to attend the language laboratory. Students may attend at their convenience, but are expected to complete certain assignments weekly: listen, imitate, and record, and write sentences or compositions based on the aural lessons. In addition, their work is tested orally at the end of each term.

The oral grammar essay is the basic model for advanced language laboratory exercises. Students listen to the most important grammatical problems: the 24 special verbs, verb tenses and time concepts, and sentence patterns. After listening to the grammar analysis several times, they must produce this analysis in their own words, using the terminology and examples of the master recording (A. S. Hornby, *Revise Your English,* BBC course, 1965, recorded on long-playing discs). Other forms of oral essays may be required, containing long descriptive passages. Students with poor pronunciation take phonetics and intonation drill work.

---

[1] Partial listing of contents.
[2] In *The Wealth of Nations.*
[3] In *The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation.*

The laboratory's collection of tapes and records includes some of the treasures of English and American literature—works by such authors as Shelley, Shakespeare, Dickens, Poe, Mark Twain, and Arthur Miller. Other English-language tapes that the students find very valuable include:

Hicks, D., "Meet the Parkers." An intermediate course recorded by BBC.

Hornby, A. S., "Oxford Progressive Course for Adult Learners." Tutor Tape Co., London.

Innes, M., "Talking Business. Placing an order. Arranging terms of payment. Registering a company. Etc." BBC course.

Judd, J., "English Conversation for Foreign Students." Tutor Tape Co., London.

King, Dr. Martin Luther, "The March on Washington," Aug. 28, 1963.

Lado-Fries, "An Intensive Course in English." English Language Institute Staff, University of Michigan, in 3 vols.

Mackin, R., "Stories of Modern Adventure." Tutor Tape Co., London.

O'Connor, J. D., "A Course of English Intonation." Recorded by BBC.

Pring, J. T., "Colloquial English Pronunciation." Gramophone Records, spoken by the author, London.

Russel, Sam. The editor of the *Morning Star,* formerly *Daily Worker* (London), visits our university. His lecture and informal talk with the students. Institute's own recording.

Taylor, G., "Practicing American English. Mastering Spoken English." Saxon Series in English as a Second Language. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1962.

"Ameriphone English Course," Washington, D.C.

"Intensive Course in English," English Language Services, Inc., Washington, D.C. Six books with 250 tapes.

"Linguaphone Conversational Course," Linguaphone Institute, London.

"Budapest, the City Beautiful," Sightseeing tour in the Hungarian capital, with colored slides. Institute recording.

Students are expected to listen to the following recorded political texts: Chamberlain in Munich; the Atlantic Charter, August 1941; Roosevelt's war message after Pearl Harbor, December 1941; Churchill on England's Finest Hour, June 1940; Churchill calls for unconditional surrender, 1943; the Charter of the United Nations; and many others.

INSTITUTE STAFF

Forty instructors—associate professors, senior lecturers, lecturers—in addition to a number of part-time assistants, are responsible for this multiphased 4-year program. Head of the department is an associate professor who speaks five languages: Russian, French, German, Greek, and Slovak. English is taught by 11 of the 40—seven full-time, four part-time—attesting to the popularity of English and its importance for social scientists.

CONCLUSION

But English is more than just a popular course and one that is necessary for social scientists. Institute staff members supplement their salaries by tutoring teachers and other professionals in many fields, for a number of Hungarian institutions pay special language allowances to employees who pass the State Foreign Language Exams. These allowances are in addition to regular salaries and are determined by the individual's degree of language proficiency. Two degrees (medium and high) and two types of exams are offered. One is a general exam open to all employees; the other is an "extended professional" exam, limited to specialists (social scientists, applied scientists, agricultural economists, etc.).

The exam is in two parts: oral and written. For example, in the 2-hour written English section, applicants are expected to translate about 250 words from Hungarian into English and English into Hungarian. In the oral English section, applicants are tested on their ability to sight-read and translate English texts into Hungarian, and vice versa. Their use of correct grammar and pronunciation is tested in formal talks and informal conversations.

Hungarians thus have many motivations for studying foreign languages and learning them in depth. And teachers of foreign languages in Hungary today are considered important and valuable members of university faculties.